

A Diamond Grove marks Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee

Volunteers plant 'Diamond Grove' with 'Heart of Oak' in Queen Elizabeth Park, Grantham



Anglesey Abbey (National Trust)

This idea first came to me in an Opening All the Gates Seminar at Anglesey Abbey, inspired by a planting of stark white silver birches, *Betula jacquemontii*, in the superb winter garden there. Having tentatively made the suggestion to Wyndham Park Forum, in Grantham, they loved it and, thanks to a great team and community endeavour, raised funding and sponsors, driven by WPF secretary, Elizabeth Bowskill, and Lynne Leconte, South Kesteven District Council.



The sun shone brilliantly last November 2011, the beginning of National Tree-Planting Week, for action stakes! Wyndham Park Forum volunteers, SKDC staff, Veolia contractors, and many tree sponsors including Lincolnshire Gardens Trust, schoolchildren and teachers from National Junior, Harrowby Lane Infants and Cliffedale Primary, gathered to watch Mr Tony Worth, the Lord Lieutenant of Lincolnshire, begin planting the 'Diamond Grove' in Queen Elizabeth Park, named in honour of the Queen Mother. In the centre, and in an appropriately diamond-shaped hole, Mr Worth carefully planted the donated 'Elizabeth Oak', grown from one of the ancient oaks dating back to Henry VIII's royal park at Grimsthorpe. John Knowles, Chairman, Wyndham Park Forum, invited the Mayor of Grantham, Cllr. Mike Taylor to plant the first of sixty silver birches, in the grove surrounding the oak. Then Mr Norman Stacks, UK Operations Director, The Woodland Trust, planted a Wild Service Tree, or Checker Tree, on the boundary of the grove, another appropriate



Mr Tony Worth, Lord Lt. of Lincolnshire



Norman Stacks, Woodland Trust

salute to Her Majesty's long service to the country. As the children and sponsors set to work with enthusiasm, all sixty silver birches were planted in no time! This spring 2012, schoolchildren will return to plant snowdrops "in the green" kindly donated by Belton Park (National Trust).

This Jubilee Year there will be thousands of trees planted all over the country, rightly so. A special book is being made by the Woodland Trust. The Royal Record, recording all the thousands of trees planted in celebration all over the country, including the Woodland Trust's Jubilee Woods project of sixty, sixty-acre woods, is to be presented to Her Majesty, and then lodged in the British Library. This Diamond Grove in Queen Elizabeth Park will be amongst all the many plantations recorded. The silver birches, also *Betula*



jacquemontii variety, should survive for fifty or sixty years, but hopefully Grantham's 'Elizabeth Oak' will live on for many centuries. The story will be told, and there will be times when this grove will literally glisten in the sunlight, to remind everyone of the long reign of a quite remarkable, dedicated sovereign.

Steffie Shields, January 2012

If you would like a copy of the Diamond Grove Plan email:

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